IronWatch

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ABYSSAL TIDINGS

A Message from the Editor

Welcome back to another fantastic issue of the IRONWATCH fan magazine!

As you might be able to tell, we are somewhat sparse on articles this issue, (Although the ones we do have this month are quite enjoyable!) and so we're asking all of you out there to make sure to send us your stories, your tutorials, your tips and your tricks.

Are you running a Kings of War or Deadzone Campaign? Tell us all about it!

Do you have a custom Warpath army or Dwarf King's Hold warband? Let us know!

The IRONWATCH runs on submissions from fans like you, and so we highly encourage those of you out there to submit whatever content you'd like to see published. The more, the merrier!

As always, whether you're a new reader or an experienced veteran, thanks for reading the IRONWATCH Fan Magazine, and Welcome to the Watch!

-Austin

Cover art by Boris Samec
Title art by Mark Peasley

Please note that, while we here at **Ironwatch** *attempt to deliver you the best products and ideas we can, we cannot guarantee the balance of any scenarios or special rules presented herein. If you find any errors, grammar mistakes, or rule imbalances, please contact us on the Mantic Forums (Look for the discussion labeled "Ironwatch Issue X Feedback") and let us know what we could do to improve your fan-produced magazine. If you are interested in writing, illustrating, or editing for our magazine, please let us know on the feedback discussion as well so you can get in on the action!*

All models used in this publication are from the respective author's own personal collections, and any models displayed herein are not intended to challenge the status of the copyrights of their respective owners. All rights are reserved to their respective owners.

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The Iron Forge

Welcome back to the Iron Forge.

On display this month for you we have Adam Morrow's striking and colorful Deadzone Rebs Support Booster!

Keep tuned in next month for more fantastic models, and if you have some painted Mantic minis you'd like featured to possibly become an Iron Forge artist, please email high resolution photos of your miniatures to ironwatchmagazine.@gmail.com. Please include your name and/or Mantic forum name. You can also provide descriptions of your paint jobs and titles if you'd like!

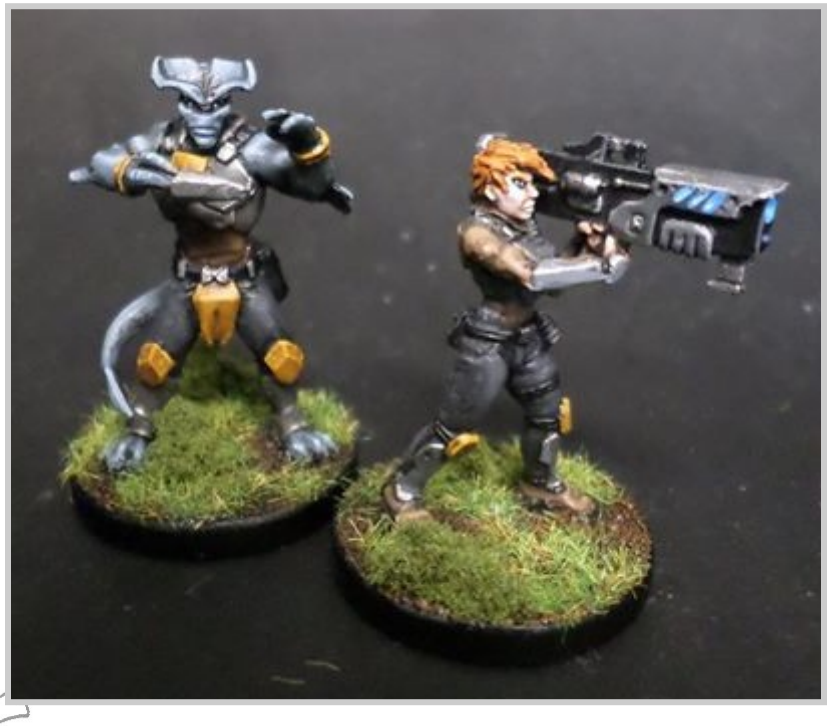
Goblin Standard Bearer by Claudia Zuminich

Plague Zombie by Paul Scott

Adam Morrow

This month I've tackled the Rebs Support Booster. All in all this was a fun, diverse group to paint, although the Judwan Medic was my favorite. The Kraaw Warrior is so far the most colorful Deadzone model I've painted, and I decided to paint him as if he were from a jungle setting, with very bright colors. The weapons crew was a fun duo as well, though what I am most proud of with them is the turnout of the loader's skin color.

ADAM MORROW



Mantic Calendar

Enforcer Pathfinder by Paul Mullis

If you have Mantic-related events or tournaments you'd like to add, please PM Matt Gilbert or Austin Peasley on the forums or **email us** with your event's date, time, location, cost, a brief description, and a URL for more information.

Please note that this list is not exhaustive and indicates where Mantic games are being enjoyed, not necessarily where Mantic will be making an official appearance (Save for the Mantic HQ, of course!).

June

6/3-6/7 **Origins**
$20 ($15 if preordered) for single-day
$65 ($55 if preordered) or full show
Dreadball Tournament from 1 PM to 9 PM on 5/5.
Kings of War 1500 pt, 3 round Tournament from 1 PM to 9 PM on 5/6.
Huge gaming convention, with 15 Kings of War events, including a Mega Battle and 1500 pt tournament.
Greater Columbus Convention Center, 400 N High St, Columbus, OH 43215, United States

6/14 **Clash of Kings 2015 Northern Regional**
£9.99 per person
9:30 AM—5:30 PM
Join our Clash of Kings UK regional tournaments and lead your Kings of War army to glory. Battle against the best in our one day tournament and take home the ultimate prize – a Tyrant Trophy and a free ticket to the final!
North-West Gaming Centre, Stockport - 1st Floor, Hallam Business Centre, Hallam Street, Stockport, SK2 6PT

Mantic Talen -

July

7/4 [Clash of Kings 2015 Midlands Regional](#)
£9.99 per person
9:30 AM—5:30 PM
Join our Clash of Kings UK regional tournaments and lead your Kings of War army to glory. Battle against the best in our one day tournament and take home the ultimate prize – a Tyrant Trophy and a free ticket to the final!
Sanctuary Gaming Centre, Sutton-in-Ashfield - St. Michaels & All Angels Church, St. Michaels Street, Sutton-in-Ashfield, NG174GP

7/4 [Orcomundo 2.0 Edition](#)
10:00 AM—4:15 PM
Come enjoy four gritty games of frantic, fast-paced bloodthirsty Dreadball action over the course of a day in a relaxed and friendly environment.
Place Dooms 12, 7012 Flénu, Belgium

7/30-8/2 [Gencon](#)
$80 per person
9:30 AM—5:30 PM
Kings of War Tournament is 5:00 PM to 12:00 AM on 8/1.
Kings of War Big Battle is 8:00 PM to 12:00 AM on 7/31.
Learn to Play Kings of War, at various times each day.
Gen Con is the original, longest-running, best-attended, gaming convention in the world!
100 South Capitol Avenue, Indianapolis, IN 46225, United States

OGRES SMASH

By Jonathan Faulkes

I spent most of last year building and painting a competitive Orc army, based on the "Pathfinder" restrictions of no more than 3 replicates of identical units.

This year I've decided to start painting Ogres, whilst still playing Orcs in KoW v1 events. The aim is to complete my army by the first KoW v2 event.

Why Ogres? Pure Ogre armies are not very competitive in v1. They are under-powered, over pointed. Even worse, you can use Ogres in a KoM army and they are better! Version 2 promises to rebalance the armies, and I know that the Ogre list will be getting some attention; I have confidence that the Rules Committee (RC) will make them viable.

So – how do you build any army without having clear sight of the rules and points? It's actually rather easy if you trust that the RC will balance the points cost and game effect well: You then just choose the units that you would like to play with in the game. I'd like to play a balanced army, so I decided to build and paint a selection of units from which I can choose 2000 pts to play with.

A big thing for me is having a clear vision in how I wanted my army to look. I wanted to multibase my units, and use a different basing technique to my other armies. I've always wanted to try out a lava field base and looking online I found a few tutorials. They all

appeared to use the same starting material for the cooled lava – cork sheeting - but then had divergent painting techniques for the lava itself. I started each unit base with a Warbases MDF base. To this I glued 5mm foam core to bulk out the base a little. On top of this I glued torn pieces of 1 to 2mm cork sheeting, aiming for around 75% base coverage and 2 / 3 layers high. I applied a small amount of fine sand to some parts of the cork, mainly around the edges where the next layer was glued. Then I applied PVA to all the exposed foam and spray painted the whole base black. A quick dry brush with dark grey, light grey and white edging gave a reasonable cooled lava look.

To get the hot lava look, I started with a base coat of Vallejo red-oxide paste. This is a red, fine textured paint which I bought online. Vallejo do several colors (brown, black, white, red and blue) with differing texture levels. Two coats gave an even color over the black base.

I then applied watered-down yellow paint over the red and left it to dry. This gave hint of orange / yellow to the un-textured parts of the base – a kind of inverse dry-brush. On top of this I applied a mix of Vallejo water effect and yellow ink. This was painted on as I didn't want any depth from the water effect, just a nice shine. Once dry, I applied a very light dry brush of dark grey and then an even lighter brush of black paint to hint at the top surface cooling a

little. I then added a small number of wild tufts to the base as even lava fields have grasses growing on them.

The next part of the project was to think of a suitable color scheme for my ogres. There are plenty of color variations for ogres – from Caucasian through to blue, green, browns and reds. I pictured my ogres as being from a volcanic but cold area. Iceland would be the best "real world" example of such a place. For the skin tone I went for an off-white with a blue tone with blond hair coloration. To achieve this scheme, I primed the models with Halfords grey primer and then dry brushed light grey and white over the model, focusing on the skin areas rather than the metallic / cloth areas. I used a small (size 2) flat brush for this as it gives much better control. I painted the metal work, armor and weapons with chainmail and once it was all dry applied a blue wash over the entire model. I tried to not let large pools form as I wanted a blue tone but not a deep blue.

Once dry, I highlighted the skin with grey through to white. The metal work had a wet-brush with chainmail-colored paint to highlight the edges. I painted the wood on the ranged weapons dark brown and added a slight highlight. I then gave it a wash of strong tone to the brown. For the leather work, straps and clothing I wanted to use two colors. The first was a simple dark grey shade. This is very neutral, like the rest of the model, and would in my view be typical of everyday clothing.

As a contrast color, I used purple. Purple has grown to be my contrast color of choice. The GW base paint covers everything with a single coat and looks great. I used this for the shields

and the pommels of the weapons. I also used it on some of the clothing and straps, trying to ensure that every model had a different mix of purple and grey. As a whole, the army would look unified but by painting different colors on different parts, the army looks suitably un-regimented.

I highlight the purple by the gradual addition of GWs base pink color, leading to a pure pink edge highlight on the shield. By not waiting for the previous color to dry, I was effectively wet-blending the colors together. It sounds more complicated than it actually was. I applied a light grey highlight to the dark grey areas and that finished the model – apart from the hair.

As I said previously, I wanted the hair to be blond. This bright yellow looks good with light blue/grey skin and makes models stand out. The only issue is that yellow is a horrid color to paint with. Coverage is poor and highlighting is hard. I used Army Painter yellow and applied two coats to the hair. I then applied army painter strong tone to the hair and then highlighted with the same yellow. This gave reasonably strong coloration.▪

Counts-as Ogre Chariots by Taylor Holloway

Tales from the Crippled Goose:

The Roadwardens Tale: A Single Oak Leaf

By Mike Tittensor

It was raining in Baerlauch. Good weather was never really common in this damp corner of Ardovikia but today it was sufficiently wet that even the damp, malodorous peasants looked out from under the dripping thatch and commented on its intensity. Summer was fading and autumn's brown fingers were stretching across the land. Baerlauch was a small market town, unremarkable for anything apart from its presence on the road to other more interesting places. It served as a nexus for the area farmers' produce, a rest stop for travellers and a centre for the production of such local wares, as the farmers themselves could not make. The locals knew very little of the world outside the rolling moors. Most didn't care to either, so topics of conversation tended towards the mundanery of husbandry, food and the weather.

On this day, their attention was drawn away from the inclement weather as the town gates opened to admit a lone traveller. Lean and muscular, he wore the leathers and mail of the Letharac Roadwardens beneath his heavily oiled all-weather cloak and hat. He rode tall in the saddle, commanding and authoritative, his eyes scanning the roads for trouble. His name was Vestin Bard and he was popular in the town, ever since he had brought in the head of the ogre that had kidnapped Goodwife Elspeth two winters ago. There was always a seat near the fire for him in The Crippled Goose Inn and the measures were always full rather than skimped. His personal history was little known. He had no family, much to the interest of the ladies of the town, but seemed in no way inclined to start one. His accent when he spoke, for his words were few, suggested an origin outside Ardovikia. He was a regular visitor and would occasionally deposit the head of an orc raider or marsh wolf at the foot of the statue of Primavera in the market square.

Pulling up his broad chestnut mare in front of the stables, he dismounted with a creaking of leather, his heavy boots raising a splash of muck as he descended to earth. Flicking a small coin to the stable lad, he let the boy lead the horse away. They were old acquaintances and the mare allowed the boy liberties that would have

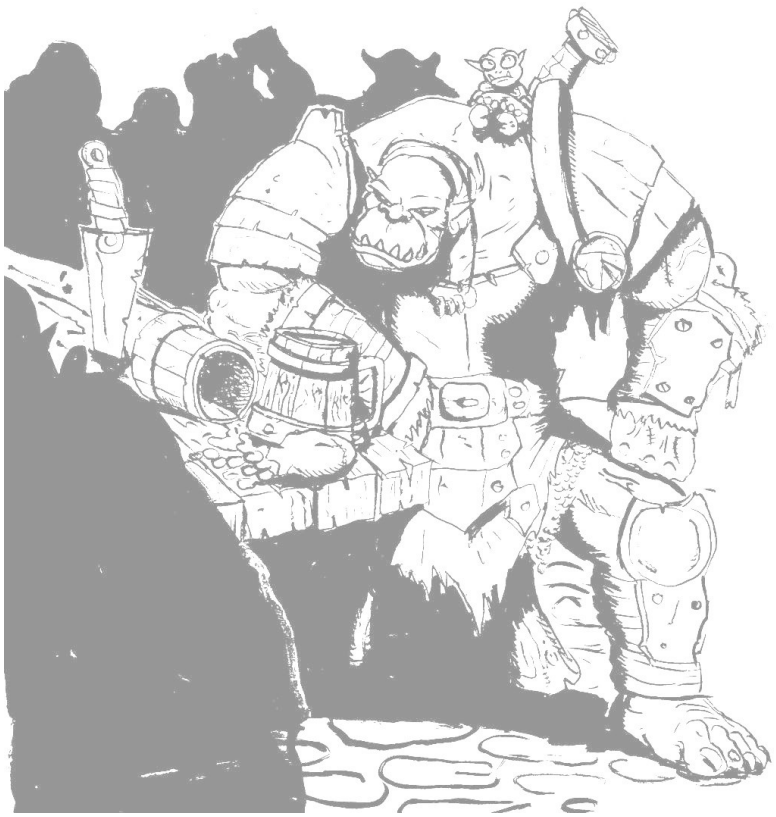
Undead Revenants by Martin Geibner

seen other men lose fingers to her snapping teeth. The boy knew that if the Roadwarden were pleased with his horse's treatment, there would be a second coin in the morning. Bard himself strode towards the Goose's weatherworn front door, pausing to scrape off the mud before ducking under the lintel into the smoky, companionable gloom of the common room. He settled himself in his corner as always and accepted the leather mug of dark beer and bowl of stew that was standard fare here. Those who watched noticed that his eyes lingered for a moment on the figure of the barmaid that had served him only to turn away with a wistful sad look on his face.

He had been away for an unusual length of time, several months in fact, rather than the monthly appearance the locals had come to expect. The common room was therefore already packed. The worthies of Baerlauch scented a good story in the offing. There was already a professional storyteller in the common room, regaling the locals with what was laughingly classed as 'international news'. He was a small, ratty man dressed in a motley robe. His face was lined and dirty but he had a certain intensity of gaze that could hold an audience in thrall on a good day. This was not one of them. His tales were not well received, being the same old woes of bandits, orc raiders and elven slavers rampaging around the South.

The patrons seemed in no mood for this sort of thing tonight. Eventually the storyteller fell silent and sank his nose in his ale mug, watching the common room over its rim. There was no applause, merely an aura of anticipation. Finally the landlord, a portly fellow who doubled as a pig butcher in his spare time, hefted a sausage on a roasting fork into the air and said "Come now, anyone else care to give us a tale. A fine

Undead Werewolf by Pete Harrison



Trolls by Grant Mahoney

plate of wurst for the best story". There was silence for a moment and the landlord's gaze swept the room. He stopped to consider the Roadwarden who was still watching the movements of the young barmaid, a new girl from somewhere up in the Moors. The landlord had employed her only a few weeks ago. "So Master Roadwarden, surely you must have news for us? What can you tell us of the wider world"?

Vestin Bard regarded the landlord coolly. He seemed to be weighing up different thoughts and finally put down his food and drink, leant forward in his chair and spoke. "Aye, I have a tale for you. A strange tale but none the less true. It concerns a Roadwarden, one of the Brotherhood that keeps townships such as yours safe". Again the odd accent that the landlord could not place. Out of the corner of his eye, though, he noted that the barmaid had stopped to listen. With a nod of encouragement towards the Roadwarden he looked at the rest of the customers who had also fallen silent. All seemed eager, even the professional who scented a story he might steal for his repertoire.

"To the East of here, the roads rise up through the Elfmoors, as you know. They're a hard area with ancient ruins of the Elder Folk dotting the landscape. The wolves are numerous and aggressive. There's worse than wolves too. The odd troll wanders down from the hills and occasionally you see griffins from the mountains looking for stray sheep. The farmers need their wits about them. There's a road that cuts towards Berndorf over the Krupp Hills. It's Dwarf made but it's not used that often anymore and with good reason. One spring, as the snows cleared, a Roadwarden of my acquaintance was checking along this road and came upon the strangest thing he'd seen. In a

Undead Skeletons by Guiseppe Aquino

small vale beneath Cronewife Hill he came upon a wood. This wood was right across the road and assuredly had not been there the autumn before, yet the trees were mature oaks and beech. Since it was only early spring, he could even make out a set of ruins in the heart of this wood. Well, being a Roadwarden it was his duty to explore so he approached the wood and passed under the dark branches of the trees. The dwarf road was still there, simply surrounded by the mature trees. It was quiet though, too quiet. There were no birds proclaiming their territories and looking for a mate. No small animals rustled in the leaf litter. Only the trees stood sentinel to this marvel.

After a few minutes he came level with the ruins. It was clearly the remains of an old temple but for the life of him, the Roadwarden did not remember ever having seen the ruins before and he knew this area well, or so he thought. He dismounted, hitched his horse's reins to a nearby tree and advanced silently through the woods. Some prescient thought made him draw his sword from its oiled scabbard and palm a weighted throwing knife in his left hand. He reached the entrance to the temple without observing any sign of life but he had survived too many encounters not to continue to be cautious.

He slipped inside the doorway and moved to the side. The temple had no roof but the interior was in reasonable repair. Stone benches still stood in rows. The High Altar, although stripped of icon or statue, was intact. There were even remains of plaster and paint on the walls. Padding silently down the side aisle, the Roadwarden noticed how the wind and the rain did not seem to penetrate here. There was an aura of calm aloofness from the forest outside.

Finally he reached the high altar and looked at it carefully. Barely discernible scratches in the form of an eagle revealed that this had once been dedicated to Our Lord Aestius but when and how this came to be built here was unknown. Convinced he had seen enough the Roadwarden turned to leave to perceive the figure blocking the doorway. A dark figure he was, in mail with a maul over his shoulder and a long black beard. He was no woodland bandit though. His eyes burned with a ghostly green light and as the Roadwarden watched, he drifted forward down the centre aisle, his feet, it seemed, not entirely attached to the floor.

A dread of the dark things of the forest seized the Roadwarden and he backed away around the altar as the wraith closed upon him. As it raised the maul to dash out his brains, he ducked under its swing and drove his sword through its chest. Now Roadwardens are a superstitious bunch…" At this Bard smiled and took a quick pull from his beer. "And this fellow was no exception. He'd had his sword thrice blessed by the Priest of Aestius in Berndorf the previous High Holy Day and it cut through the ghost like fire through butter. The maul clattered to the ground and the wraith dissipated like smoke in a breeze.

Well, the Roadwarden was shaken, I can tell you. He breathed deeply and muttered a prayer to Aestius before starting to head for the door. He was halfway up the aisle when the same figure, showing no signs of any wounds stepped into the doorway again, heaving its maul above its head. This time it rushed upon him and he was forced to parry the high strike with a clang. Then, twisting his sword downwards he skewered the thing through its neck on the riposte. Again at the touch of the sanctified sword, the wraith collapsed upon itself. The Roadwarden was pretty scared by now and wanted out of here. He could hear his horse whinnying in the distance and he began to run towards the entrance. A third time, though, the dark figure appeared in the doorway, maul in hand. The Roadwarden was ready though. Swinging his sword to intercept the maul as it began to arc in towards him, he stepped forward and thrust the dagger in his left hand in and up into where the spectre's heart would have once been. The apparition gave a wail and faded again.

As he ran, the Roadwarden glanced at his blades to note that they were pitted and corroded as if they had lain out on the ground for many years. His horse had gone, the branch where he had hitched it snapped with violence. Not really blaming it, he retreated back through the wood in search of it. He found it grazing quietly at the edge of the trees as if nothing had happened and he spent several minutes calming it, checking its tack and generally taking his own mind off the events of the previous hour. As he finished his tasks with his mount, he became aware that he was being watched. Glancing up without moving his head, he saw a cave high up on Cronewife Hill. Again, he thought he knew most of the caves in this area since they tended to be the natural dens of animals and worse. Yet this one was new to him. He could make out a vague human figure, sunk back in the

Kingdoms of Men Missile Troops by Andre Kritzinger

shadows of the cave mouth to be sure but still visible watching him.

He mounted his horse and began to ride back up the road, deliberately looking in every direction except towards the cave. Once he had crested the rise, he swung back and rode up through the hillside gorse to bring him above the cave entrance. Here, he tied his horse's reins to a bush and began to creep downhill to the mouth of the fissure. The first thing he noticed was the smell, an unwholesome reek of rotting flesh and ordure. The next thing was the flies, great fat bloated creatures that had no right being about this early in the spring. Drawing his weapons, he edged round the side of the cave mouth and peered within.

It went back about thirty paces into the hill, its rear almost lost in the gloom. The limestone walls were daubed with ochre paint to depict strange, unpleasant figures with horned headdresses (he hoped they were head-dresses) cavorting and dancing. Elsewhere the image was of an eight-spoked wheel supported by two flanking skeletons. Inside the door was a fire pit with old ashes and next to it a bed. Upon the cot lay a skeletal form dressed in rags. Its long grey hair bedecked with blue beads suggested a woman but it was difficult to be sure. Lying at her side was a fresh corpse of a hare, its innards exploded from stomach gas and the maggots crawled freely over its skin.

Although not a squeamish man, the Roadwarden disliked something about the intensity of the dead animal's stare, which seemed to follow him around the cave. Beyond this at the back, the Roadwarden made out a stone table lit from above by a shaft rising up through the rock. Stepping warily forward he could see a twisted dagger driven with great force into the tabletop pinning a painted card to the surface marred the polished top. A thin pile of other painted cards lay beside it.

The Roadwarden stepped forward and looked down at the table. The painted card showed a picture that filled him with fear. It was of a woodland scene at the heart of which was a ruined temple almost lost among the twisting branches. At the doorway of the temple was a

Undead Vampire by Boris Samec

Undead Soul Reavers by Christian Schlumpberger

shadowy figure, barely a smudge in charcoal, of a human figure with a hefty weapon over its shoulder. He switched his sword to his left hand and took hold of the hilt of the dagger. It was wrapped with badly finished leather where the bristles of whatever animal had furnished the skin still clung to the surface. He heaved fruitlessly at the dagger only for the hilt to cut his hand. It was stuck firmly into the polished stone of the table.

He pulled again, wincing at the pain from his hand but all the more intent on removing that dagger. Blood trickled down the hilt and he watched with suddenly frozen fascination as a single scarlet trail pooled on the cross hilt and then dripped onto the blade itself. At the first touch, the dagger sprang free of the tabletop. The Roadwarden staggered, dropped both his sword and the dagger and leant against the cave wall. He did not notice that the hand he used to steady himself left a bloody handprint alongside the other marks on the pale stone. He felt dizzy and sick. He was both guilty and relieved at what he had done and felt the need for fresh air and the open sky.

He turned towards the cave mouth and groaned. There, before him, stood an old woman, her silver hair floating freely in some unfelt breeze with blue crystal beads threaded through it. Of the skeleton on the bed, there was no sign. Her eyes blazed with the same intensity as the dark warrior in the ruined temple but on her lips was a smile. It was not a pleasant one. It

Kingdoms of Men Knights by "imm0rtal reaper"

was the twisted smile of the hunter that has cornered its prey. The crone's voice was thin and reedy as she said, "So you did not like the fate chosen? Yet a choice must be made. Look at the other cards and tell me which you would rather have".

The Roadwarden tried to step forward only for the old woman to wave her hand slowly and he froze. His limbs simply refused to move him any further forward. She shook her head and smiled. "None of that. There must be a path. A choice must be made. You will choose one of those cards, young man. Fate can be changed, yes, the greatest mages in Leith know that but it cannot be denied. Now choose"! At this she clenched her fist and the Roadwarden felt a searing pain in the palm of his bleeding hand. "Choose"!

He turned back to the painted cards and picked up the first. At once he felt the same dizziness as when he had pulled out the dagger. Then he

looked into the painting. The figures moved in his mind only stopping when he focused very closely on them through a supreme effort of will. Trees swayed in some unseen wind. He felt as if he could hear the leaves rustling. Witchery of the worst sort! Then the magic overcame him and he was drawn into looking at the image.

At first it seemed to be a simple woodland grove with a well at its centre at the side of the road. A merchant caravan approached and paused to fill their water casks and canteens. The portly merchant on a mule at its head reminded the Roadwarden of a man he had met in Letharac. As the Roadwarden watched, the merchant wiped his forehead with a kerchief and then drank from his newly filled canteen. At first he seemed satisfied with its taste and drank a second time He licked his lips and drank a third time emptying the canteen with relish. Then he dismounted and made for the well. Half way there he paused, sank to his knees and with a look of surprise toppled over, dead before his body hit the cobbles of the dwarf road. From the trees the Roadwarden then watched a flock of black winged creatures, perhaps once akin to bats descend to feed on the members of the caravan, all of whom lay dead on the road. The Roadwarden threw the card from his hand and it landed beneath the stone table.

“Not to your taste, eh”? cackled the old woman. “You are the lucky one. You get to choose the fate”. Haltingly, the Roadwarden picked up the second card. Again the dizziness and nausea.

Undead Skeletons by Jim Kew

Again the feeling of being drawn into the depths of the landscape.

It was dark on the road and the wood had disappeared. By the light of the moons, the Roadwarden saw a pedlar approach, holding a small lantern in a box of wrought iron and glass. The Roadwarden knew the fellow, an itinerant knife sharpener and whitesmith from somewhere to the South in Valentica. The pedlar was making good progress in the dark, no doubt hoping to find somewhere to sleep soon. He passed under the lea of a great rock overhanging the path and then stopped, looking behind him. Atop the rock, its form outlined by the moonlight behind it, was a monstrous beast.

Its body was in form that of a great wolf but its head was too broad and its mouth filled with jagged teeth in several rows. From its shoulders, stubby wings sprouted uselessly and around its neck a crest of feathers flicked out and closed like a peacock's as it watched the pedlar. Then without a word or noise from either of them, it leapt from the rock and sank its fangs into the man. The scene shifted. Clearly time had passed. The roadside was now littered with bodies now. Some were travellers, others soldiers and among the common folk, knights in full harness lay dead, their armour stained with blood and their limbs broken. The nobility of Man brought low by the ferocity of the wilderness. The Roadwarden sank to his knees as he dropped the card. "No, not that one either, then? This might take longer than I thought".

The third card was even harder to pick up than the first two. A dribble of vomit trickled down the side of the Roadwarden's mouth. This time the wood was back but at its heart was not a temple but a single bloated tree. Its bark twisted and groaned as if something or some things inside desperately wanted to break out. A strange ichor oozed from cracks and glistened like blood as it flowed down the wood. The Roadwarden noted that strange lizard-like things lapped at the ichor with their prehensile tongues.

One such creature was suddenly engulfed by a spurt of the ichor and trapped within, like a fly in amber. Its companions kept feeding. The tree

Elven Lord by Jonathan Faulkes

had leaves like strips of rags, dark, grey and brown, fluttering without noise. As the wind gusted, the strips shredded and floated off into the air, being born downwind. The Roadwarden found himself following them through the air as the floated across the moors. There he saw the town of Baerlauch before him. As the dark strips passed over the town walls they dipped down to the ground, occasionally stroking the exposed cheek or hand of a passing townsman or woman. Where they did, dark boils sprang up or fiery rashes erupted on skin. The townsfolk scratched furiously but with horror the Roadwarden saw the boils spread over their bodies and then pass from person to person without restraint. In a matter of moments, Baerlauch was a screaming mass of plague-ridden victims. He managed to crumple the card as he threw it violently away.

"Actually, you'd be surprised at how often some people choose that one" came the witch's voice behind him. He turned and looked at her, wild eyed, as he seized the next one, determined to end this ordeal.

The fourth card was a picture of a glade in which dancers cavorted around a fire. The orange flames flickered and the light reflected from the trees where grisly trophies of skulls and other things too horrible to describe were displayed in triumph. The Roadwarden looked at the dancers, lost in abandoned exultation, mostly naked, ecstatic, consumed by their passions. They were human or had been once. Now the marks of dark magic were upon them, a deformed limb here, a pallid glow to the skin there. As they danced, the Roadwarden looked at the fire where a pyre was set and at its heart a noble knight writhed and screamed as the flames consumed his body while his captors laughed. With a shudder, the Roadwarden

Undead Necromancer by "left64"

recognised the knight as having the face of his elder brother whom he had not seen for years. Clinging to the stone table for support, he dropped the card. Spatters of blood from beneath his fingernails marked the card.

The fifth card showed a pool of dark water near the roadside. It was not unpleasant in itself. There were trees and grass and a merchant train had camped here. Two merchants were discussing pricing of their goods in an animated, good-hearted manner. Again the Roadwarden was convinced that he had seen these men coming up from Sathoi over the last couple of years. Then, without reason the discussion went from animated to aggressive in tone. One merchant called the other a cheat. The second

Elven Archer by Neil Dixon

called the first a liar. The first merchant then lunged at his companion with a belt-knife and they rolled on the ground with murderous intent. After a few minutes struggle, the first merchant triumphed. He fumbled for something inside his victim's robes and grinned with a feral smile. He was a changed man. A darker, twisted soul now walked the land. The Roadwarden was far enough back in the picture though to have seen behind them, to have sensed the brooding, lurking presence in the pool that had reached out into their minds to twist their thoughts and words. Two simple, fallible humans had been made to battle murderously and then go out to make the world a worse and darker place. Once allowed into the world, it would work its evil through others. So far, that had been the worst fate of all. To take men's bodies and lives was bad. To steal their souls and minds was worse. Struggling to his feet, he spun the card away from him. Behind the Roadwarden, the old woman frowned.

The last card showed the woodland returned. A young woman stepped from the trees and stood looking at him. She was clad in browns and greens. Her features were too sharp to be beautiful but here hair was long and fine falling in corn coloured waves. Beside her stood a knight. Instead of armour of metal he stood wearing plates made from bark. His shield sprouted shoots of new life and his weapon was a great club of hardwood. The young woman was clearly a nymph, one of the wood spirits that unwittingly lured travellers away from their families and friends for a generation so that they might only return long after the death of those that they loved.

The Roadwarden looked at the nymph and inside his head could hear her voice saying that she only desired him and never wished to hurt anyone. With saddened eyes he turned to look at the knight standing behind her. The knight looked directly back at him, the first figure so far to have been able to perceive him from all the cards. The knight's face was his own.

The Roadwarden stood and regarded at the old woman. She smiled knowingly and played unconsciously with the beads in her hair. An aura of triumph passed across her face.

Elven Spearmen by Paul Mitchell

"Choose, Roadwarden," she murmured. Without a word, the Roadwarden took this last card and picked up the twisted knife. He issued a prayer to the old gods to watch over his family in distant lands and asked that they might forgive him for never returning to them. He then placed the card on the stone table and drove the bloodstained blade into the card. There was a return of the dizziness but he felt stronger and clearer-headed than before. The witch stood before him. She had taken up his sword and held it out in front of her, its tip pointing at his breast. "Oh, a noble choice. Such self sacrifice!" she mocked him. "However, I desire more than simply your soul for a few years. I will have more".

"No" said the Roadwarden, normally a man of few words and from within his jacket he hurled the throwing knife left-handed. It tumbled through the air and both watched it as it completed its last arc to embed itself in the witch's eye socket. For a moment, a look of surprise flitted across her face and then the pale skin parted to reveal the skull beneath. The flesh on her hands fell away and the Roadwarden's sword dropped to the cave floor with a discordant clang. With a clatter, the ancient dry bones collapsed on a heap next to the bed. Still the corpse of the slain hare

Undead clash against Kingdoms of Men by Nick Williams

regarded him but he stepped past it noticing that the maggots were dead and the stench of putrescence had faded. Picking up his sword and retrieving his knife from the skull, the Roadwarden stepped out of the cave and looked down into the vale. The wood was still there but more wholesome. He turned his horse loose and then began to walk down towards it. In the trees, he could see a lithe, blonde figure darting between the trees waiting for him to come to her".

The denizens of the common room of the Crippled Goose Inn sat silently and looked at Ventis Bard. None dared speak. Bard drained his beer mug and waved it meaningfully at the barmaid who refilled it. The landlord noted that a brief smile passed between the two as she poured the brown liquid from an earthenware jug. He turned back towards the common room and added, "The story is about how sometimes one is faced with choices that are all bad. There is no easy and right choice. The gods test us to see if we can choose the least bad option. The story is a metaphor for the complications of real life as opposed to fairy stories. Do you understand"? There was some hurried nodding and some relieved looks in the bar as they all said that, yes, of course they understood it was a 'mettifore', what did you take us for, peasants? The Roadwarden shook his head and turned his attention to the sausages. After a while the common room cleared and

the patrons of the Goose departed for their homes. The rain had given over and there was a clean fresh smell to the air; well as clean and as fresh as Baerlauch ever got.

The landlord waited for the last of them to go before he went to collect the sausage plate. He was shrewder than most. Either that or he didn't know what a metaphor was. "So is that Roadwarden still there with the nymph then"? he asked. Ventis Bard looked up into his eyes and smiled sadly.

"No, he's not. One can apparently not simply kill a witch like that with a simple blessed dagger. She was waiting for the next traveller, a young knight from Primantor with grand ideas and hopes. He was given the same choices bar one. Instead of the nymph and self-sacrifice, he was shown a knight-errant who defended the road against all comers, a knight in oak armour bearing a mighty club. If he could defeat that knight he would have won and would break the curse forever".

"And"? asked the landlord, wiping the sausage fat off his fingers onto his apron. "Did he? Was the curse broken"?

"Not in quite that way, no. He was a mighty knight and one swing of his sword split the wood-knight's club in two. However, he didn't think to look for a punch dagger in the wood-knight's left hand. So, now, there is a new, one-eyed wood knight and the old one has moved onto better things". At this, he winked at the barmaid whose face split into a broad grin. For a first time, the landlord really noticed that her hair was blonde and that tucked behind one ear, she had a single oak leaf.

Undead Revenant King by Andre Kritzinger

To follow:

The Storyteller's Tale
The Knight's Tale
The Nymph's Tale
The Merchant's Tale
The Pedlar's Tale▪

Interviewing Kara Brown: The General of North America

By Austin Peasley

This month we had the pleasure of interviewing Kara Brown, recent winner of Mantic's Clash of Kings at Adepticon, marking her as the top Kings of War player in North America! We wanted to see what was ticking behind that strategic mind, and get some feedback from her on the future of Kings of War as the second edition is quickly approaching the release date.

Adepticon 2015, courtesy of Mantic Games

Kara began her gaming experience with Dungeons and Dragons at age 8, and later on with Star Wars as well. Her first forays into miniatures gaming came with trying Battletech for the first time in high school, inspired by the popularity of the Robotech TV show at the time. Kara was not initially a wargamer, having never played Warhammer Fantasy, but instead playing Battletech and other miniatures games. From there, she moved to the original Mage Knight, and then on to Mechwarrior Dark Age.

Despite having begun playing Mechwarrior halfway through the Age of Destruction block, she quickly rocketed upwards to play at the national level competitively, and from there to world championship tournaments. Unfortunately, the success of the Mechwarrior

Courtesy of Kara Brown

Dark Age line as a whole was not doing as well as Kara's victories, and after the Mechwarrior competitive scene began to wither, she left miniature gaming for a while and began to focus more on boardgames.

Kara is originally from Dayton, Ohio, which is situated perfectly at the halfway point between the two of the biggest tabletop gaming conventions in North America: GenCon, and Origins. It was at Origins that Kara's partner Amy managed to, in her words, "drag her to her first game of Kings of War." Mike Carter, a Pathfinder for Kings of War in Kara's area, helped introduce her to the game, and from there she's expanded her collection of both models and victories on the battlefield. While she started with Basileans as her first army, she has since moved to playing more with Abyssal Dwarves, using some of her old Mechwarrior Dark Age figurines to represent Obsidian Golems on the table.

When it comes to faction preference, Kara is a woman of many tastes. She has a small Kingdoms of Men army with a distinct steampunk theme that she uses currently as a supplemental ally force for her Abyssal Dwarf and Basilean armies, but she is currently awaiting the Abyssals from the Kings of War mini-Kickstarter and says that anyone planning to face off against her at Clash of Kings next year can look forward to either Abyssals or Basileans on the field.

For Basileans specifically, Kara said that she had originally picked the army because it was new, not commonly fielded, and had no idea of what units were in it or if it would be an army she would really enjoy. As it turns out, the combination of super-tough units like angels, and incredible adaptiveness granted by the speed of the fast units of angels and panthers matched her playstyle preferences wonderfully. She particularly enjoys using the Phoenix, which everyone has dubbed "The Chicken," and recalls that Andrew Sherman, creator of the Mantic Radio podcast, definitely doesn't enjoy seeing

her fielding one across the table from him. The ability of the Basileans to field slow core units protected and flanked by faster skirmishers is what Kara says makes them so appealing for her to use.

On a different note, her current army, the Abyssal Dwarves, play very much the opposite. They are a "turtle" army, and Kara says she originally wanted to use them as a way to use her Mechwarrior figures. The playstyle for Abyssal Dwarves is very different, however, resulting in several difficult early games as she adapted to their reduced speed and markedly different playstyle. Her preferred playstyle for Abyssal Dwarves is a slow, defense-oriented army; What she calls the "Wall of Golems" tactic, fielding several units of Lesser Obsidian Golems as a tough line while mortars and cannons behind them rain down destruction on the enemy army. Kara doesn't use as many war machines as most other Abyssal Dwarf armies she's seen, but while some folks she's spoken with have told her that gunline armies comprised of maximum numbers of war machines would be victorious, she's come across and beaten such armies on several occasions.

Kara's army for Clash of Kings was comprised of both Abyssal Dwarves and the new Army of Nature. Nature's forces added a large element of speed that the Abyssal Dwarves badly needed, with her force featuring Air Elementals as well as a Basilisk, and when combined with the Abyssal Dwarf Gargoyles, the three quick skirmishing units were able to make quick work of enemy gunline armies. This was also aided by the small Clash of Kings hill terrain, which meant that the enemy cannons were usually

Adepticon 2015, courtesy of Mantic Games

Courtesy of Kara Brown

poorly-hidden and bunched together.

Lesser Obsidian Golems are probably Kara's favorite Abyssal Dwarf unit, and she made heavy use of them in her Clash of Kings force. She even included a Greater Obsidian Golem, which costs more than the Troop of 3 Lesser Golems but is has a statline which many believe to be inferior to the Lesser Golem Troop; Kara says that despite this, she enjoys the look of including such a model too much to refuse, and included one anyways for fun.

One fun tactic she has tried in the past has been to supplement the Lesser Golems with Undead Necromancer allies, as the Dark Surge from the Necromancer can provide a much-needed boost to the Shambling speed of the Golems. However, Kara said that this tactic quickly lost effectiveness when it encountered a hard unit of tough-to-kill elite models in a game against Andrew Sherman, but she says she looks forward to an upcoming Abyssal Dwarf hero in Kings of War Second Edition, as said hero will be capable of casting Dark Surge on the Golems.

Kara said she was considering using the Necromancer and Golems tactic for Clash of Kings, but her work as a teacher became unexpectedly busy and she didn't have enough time to make an army with Undead units. Instead, she decided to use the Armies of Nature to supplement her force as it was the faction her wife had on hand and was already painted. As it turns out, the Basilisk was a particularly effective unit at Clash of Kings, and one that was apparently difficult for her opponents to counter effectively.

Moving on to a more detailed exploration of tactics and stratagems, Kara said her one of her favorite Abyssal Dwarf strategies is simple castling. She prefers to park her cannons and mortars on a hill, close together and with a golem unit behind them so close that they can't be flanked by any enemy flying skirmishers; For Clash of Kings, she tried using a unit of Slave Orcs instead of Golems to defend her artillery, since a large unit of them was cheap, but still tough and strong enough to kill off

adventuresome fliers.

One particular tactic that can reap impressive results is to put a weak unit of golems or orcs in front, with a 'striker' unit that is weaker but can do more damage sitting directly behind it. While more experienced players might not be caught with this strategy, Kara says that you can surprise players by then moving the weaker unit to the side and charging with the striker unit; Most players tend to expect your forces in front to be the ones to charge them first, and a stronger attack from a concealed unit can punch a damaging hole in their lines.

In her third game at Clash of Kings against Jon Carter (The son of Pathfinder Mike Carter), Kara tried something new, and while she ran her normal defensive wall, she clustered all of her flier units on the opposite edge. Running them up the edge of the table turned out to be a winning move, as she was able to sweep up the enemy war machines with ease, and from there roll her fliers along the flanks of the remainder of the army.

For the game against Mike Carter, there was definitely some friendly competition occurring before a die even landed. Kara describes them as having a "love-hate relationship" due to how often they've faced off against each-other in the final tiers of multiple tournament games. The ensuing battle was nasty and devastating for both sides, but the dice gods were on her side; Her guns had great luck against Mike's zombie hordes, with 3 warmachines hitting a Zombie Endless Horde in a single turn and managing to make it evaporate under the weight of 14, 10, and 9 damage (For a total of 33 damage in a single bout of shooting!).

Shifting over to Basileans, Kara says she tends to be far more aggressive with them than with Abyssal Dwarves, keeping the expensive units

Abyssal Dwarf Halfbreeds by "puggimer"

together to concentrate the damage when they hit as well as to help keep them better protected than spreading them out (It's a tactic she also uses when she's played as Elves as well). Against horde armies like Goblins, she's said she's found that Basileans start to have trouble as they simply can't kill stuff fast enough!

On the tabletop, she keeps her units close together, to make sure anyone wanting to face her army is facing the entire bulk of it rather than having it spread out across the table. She keeps her paladins and spearmen flanked with angels and panther cavalry, and has support units like Phoenixes moving in from behind. The Phoenix in particular is very effective, and is looking to become even more powerful in Kings of War Second Edition due to improvements to its Regeneration; Kara said she's had a Phoenix recover 7 of 8 Damage in a single turn, and that was just using the older version of Regeneration.

Courtesy of Kara Brown

She recommends the Phoenix as a fantastic support unit due to being a great healer, and being incredibly difficult to get rid of; People like to fire on it since it will just keep healing friendly units if left alone. While others prefer Elohi, Kara stands by the Phoenix, although she does still enjoy using angels despite the nerf to their statline, and is thinking of building a new Basilean army next year as well.

When I asked about what factions she enjoyed playing against, Kara said that she greatly enjoys seeing people try the same strategies against her as she prefers to use, such as a friend who was playing with a fast and elite Elven army against her Basilean force; While most players

Abyssal Dwarf Lesser Obsidian Golems by Grant Mahoney

she's encountered usually don't prefer to take on war machines straightaway, Kara usually prefers to, and her skirmishers were caught by a unit her opponent had set behind his war machines to protect them.

In particular, she says that she often has problems against Elves, although she says this may be due more to excellent generalship on the part of her Elven opponents than the faction itself, and she also frequently has difficulties with her Basileans against well-played Goblin armies. However, Kara says her Abyssal Dwarves can table a Goblin force due to the Goblins having such a hard time breaking through the line of Golems.

Kingdoms of Men are another force she's seen difficulties against, in particular due to the sheer variety possible within the force and the difficulty that presents in adapting to. One of her Kingdoms of Men opponents was fielding an all-cavalry army which gave her pause, but she managed to take on and destroy it in parts; She says that if she hadn't been successful in breaking it up piecemeal, her opponent probably would have been victorious in the end. Kara also says she's not a huge fan of facing off against Mike's Abyssal Dwarf army, as it plays similar to her Obsidian Golem army, but with less Golems and more actual dwarves in it.

Changing tack, when asked what her least favorite faction was to play as, Kara firmly answered with Undead. While a powerful army in their own right, their playstyle is antithesis to her preferences, as they are not defensive, and can't sit back in a turtle defensive line, but also lack the speed to be an effective quick-strike army like Basileans. You just have to power across the board to hit the opponent with whatever makes it across, and while it's an accurate and thematic portrayal of the Undead, it makes it difficult to play them effectively, especially given her strategic preferences.

Orcs are a faction she does enjoy playing, as they're fun and fairly easy to field; Kara

described it as “You basically just point them at the enemy and hope you roll well.” She’s also looking forward to playing as Abyssals, especially now that they’ve gotten much-needed improvements to their army list since it’s initial release (In particular, the Regeneration being so easy to neutralize if your opponent had Zap units). She’s never played against an Abyssal force, but is certain that there will be more and more of them cropping up on tabletops due to how cool the units look, and since people who backed the mini-Kickstarter and got starter armies might pick more of the new armies than the existing ones.

Speaking of the mini-Kickstarter, Kara sprang for two of the mega-armies: Abyssal and Nature. She says for her new Nature army, she’s going to be focusing on lots of Salamanders since her theme for the overall force is “dragons.” Originally she had been trying to work on a Dwarven army, but decided to switch to focusing on a Nature force after seeing some awesome dragon miniatures. She’s got a Daenerys Stormborn model (From the ‘Game of Thrones’ series) t serve as her druid leader for the army, but is looking to add more figures to that force as they are looking to be slightly less effective in the Second Edition army list.

Courtesy of Kara Brown

As for Abyssals, she says she likes the look of the fireball-shooting Lesser Abyssals, and the Succubi statlines are very much in her preferred playstyle (Squishy, but hard-hitting). She says she’s probably going to field lots of heroes and monsters, as she really likes the look and style of the big demons and demon champions. She also really enjoys the stats for the Temptress unit as well, and says that “I’m getting into a Kickstarter that’s a surprise, and that may show up at Clash of Kings.”

When asked about the future of

her forces, Kara said she's definitely looking forward to trying out the new spells, and fielding some varied casters instead of straight-up Zap units. She also is anticipating using some of the Dragons that people are going to be getting as part of the Kickstarter, and wants to see how they'll do on the field now that war machines have been toned-down. Kara says that the main reason she doesn't use the big 300-point or more monsters is because they can get countered so easily by war machines, but now that war machines don't hit quite as hard it makes the bigger monsters and heroes more viable; She says she's happy about this despite her Abyssal Dwarves fielding so many war machines, and that now it means a larger unit will be more likely to be injured instead of being killed in a single shot from a war machine.

For the same reasons as she's looking forward for bigger monsters, Kara's also looking forward to using more hordes. She normally prefers smaller and more maneuverable units, but wants to experiment with a little of both types of unit sizes, such as a core horde to center an army around and then smaller units to support it. It will be easier to do that now with the tournament points going up, she says, and now that hordes let you take a war machine and a hero and a monster, the sheer number of special units that unlocks for you to use will be hard to say no to.

Continuing to look forward, we asked Kara about what her thoughts were on Kings of War in general, both where it currently stands as well as the directions it looks to be heading in the future. She said that one of the things she particularly enjoys about Kings of War is the inclusiveness, and how the players she's met have helped make it a very welcoming and inclusive atmosphere. One of the main reasons she mentioned for never getting involved with Warhammer was due to elitism and not feeling welcome, in particular "A lot of sexist bullshit, like 'Go play with Barbies.'" The Kings of War playerbase is nothing like that, she's found, although she does worry a bit that this might change as Kings of War expands and gets more converts from other systems that could bring that elitism along with them. However, she says that she's found that "a good remedy for the elitism is mopping the floor with them to show them they're not that 'elite' after all."

For the Kings of War system itself, she said she's

Dwarven Ironguard by Boris Samec

looking forward to the Second Edition adjustments that will help with overall balance, such as changing the metagame to remove the incentive for war machine spam and making army composition more flexible with the removal of required units. Kara says that of course some armies and strategies will probably still be broken, but hopefully not as broken as before.

For the social side of the hobby, Kara is definitely hoping for Kings of War to continue expanding, and suspects that there are large opportunities for growth given that "the 'other game' has been making several changes that have been making players unhappy." She's seen lots of warhammer players asking questions at a Cincinnati tournament, and said she was pleased to see that at a recent local tournament, despite there only being 6 players fully 50% of the players were female. Kara says that while typically women aren't treated very well by numerous elements of the tabletop hobby due to harassment and innuendo, she is grateful that Kings of War is both a different game and a different environment to play in, and hopes that it continues to be welcoming without becoming elitist.

One of her favorite sayings for the hobby is "Kings of War is the miniature wargame where tactics actually matter," and she says that's absolutely true. Kara has said that she's lost games due to simply being outplayed, and while it doesn't happen often, she doesn't mind at all when she's been outplayed and thinks it's an awesome experience. She loves that Kings of War has that level of tactical play, and believes it's not going to change.

She recounted horror stories about Warhammer, and how "one of her friends who played occasionally (And now plays Kings of War) knew the enemy player's setup was such that he had already lost, mechanically, without rolling a die, and that is crap!" She says there should always be a chance for success, or else otherwise why even play? Kara reiterated that "the point of gaming is to have fun, and an outcome like that is not fun; That's the word that is the most important, is that the game is actually fun."

Dwarven Ironguard by "Dusty"

Moving back to wargaming in general, Kara said one of her favorite parts about wargaming was making interesting armies, collating figures, and putting together an army with neat ideas to try out. However, equally important to her is the camaraderie, and recounting after the game the "Did you see that? That unit was dead to rights, but double-1s and ah jeez!" She said she enjoys that more than playing sometimes, and that making friends and meeting people afterwards is almost more fun than the game itself.

Kara said she used to play Starcraft, and that the game was one part, but recounting how it was afterwards was another huge part of the fun. She loves building groups of friends she'll

Abyssal Dwarf Ironcaster by Grant Mahoney

see at conventions and other places, and said she enjoys seeing everyone getting better at competitive play. She suspects that she won't get quite as high up in the rankings at Clash of Kings next year, but said that everyone involved this year were very strong and challenging players.

We'd asked Kara about what other Mantic games she plays, and for now she said she just plays Dreadball. She prefers the Syphr teams (The shark people), but says that she's nowhere near as good with Dreadball as she is with Kings of War, and advises that anyone looking for revenge on the tabletop should challenge her to a Dreadball match.

When asked about other tabletop games, she said that they've converted their dining room into a game room, so they have tons of shelves covered in boardgames. She prefers deckbuilding games like Dominion, along with classics like Settlers of Catan and Carcassonne. The repurposed dining room also serves as an assembly/crafting area, and is where she uses her new airbrush. For those of you out there considering using an airbrush, Kara says they're amazing and easy to get a great basecoat, as well as for doing broader work (Just be careful when attempting to do fine details with it, and avoid getting a cheap one). She says the airbrush has cut her army painting time in half, and has opened up the possibility to do cool light effects like light sheens and such; Her Abyssal Dwarf army was the first such one she painted with her airbrush.

Recalling back to Clash of Kings, when asked about her most memorable moment at that event, she said it was likely during her battle against Jon, when the tide of battle shifted and she could tell that she was not only going to beat him, but likely table him as well; This would be the first time she had ever tabled him, and said it was kind-of awesome given that he had tabled her before with the same sort of dice-luck she had gotten in this game. However, she says she can't rely on that sort of luck next year, and fully expects Jon to either win, or give everyone a good run for their money.

Other fun moments included a campaign game the next day, and getting to experience weird rolls and strings of odd situations without trying to win any big championships. The campaign was a progressive one that Mike made, starting at 1500 points and adding 500 pts after each game depending on how well you'd done before. Although this was after Clash of Kings, Kara decided to use someone else's loaner army, and played the campaign as Orcs; She didn't win, but still had a fun and refreshing time with the different army.

Her other standout moment was getting to meet Ronnie, CEO of Mantic, and going from someone he probably couldn't pick out of a crowd to being on a first-name basis; As Kara said, "It was nice to become a celebrity in under 24 hours!" She also enjoyed making so many new friends, including the opponents she got to play against. One new friend, Bill, said "Kara Brown is the player that will come in, destroy your entire army, smile the entire time, and make you feel good about it despite having crushed your dreams." She says that it's probably due to the teacher in her, as she doesn't want to make people feel bad despite enjoying winning. She likes telling someone how she beat them, offering advice so they can get better, and said she strongly dislikes people who hoard their knowledge "like it's some kind of secret sauce, and nobody will ever be able to beat them if they hold onto it." Kara says that's definitely not what the game is really about.

We asked her a bit more about her teaching, and she said she's currently teaching IT at a community college, and while she originally had a masters in MIS, an undergraduate degree in History, and a job as a systems engineer building and working on high-end servers, she quit intentionally to become a teacher. She says she loves it, and is pursuing a doctorate this fall for Education; Her focus will be on distance learning, which is IT based, and looks to see about helping people use technology to learn outside of a classroom. Kara says that distance learning is very valuable, as it opens up learning for people who might not be able to be in a physical classroom, and she currently teaches

Adepticon 2015, courtesy of Mantic Games

online courses that are about a 50-50 split between online and physical lectures.

Delving a bit more into her hobbies, Kara is a proud geek, and a fan of a wide variety of shows, movies, and of course, games. She says she saw Age of Ultron the first day it came out, and that she actually met her partner over a mutual love of geekdom: They met after a discussion about the first Avengers movie, had their first date shortly thereafter, and she married Amy in December. She's been trying to get Amy into Kings of War tournaments, but she doesn't win as often as Kara does (At least, not yet!).

Touching one last time on Kings of War, Kara said one of her favorite moments of Kings of War as a whole was during a game against Andrew Sherman. Kara describes Andrew as being "a supremely confident person; He's a nice guy, but he knows he's a good player. He sat across from a girl he'd never met before, and had no inkling that she would give him any challenge." Kara proceeded to win, and she says the look on his face was priceless. They're good friends now, and she says he talks her up all the time, but after that game he said "That was the best damn tactical game I've ever played" (Although Kara says he made a great showing during the game as well). She says that game was when she first felt like she was being accepted into the Kings of War community, and that was at her first tournament; Incidentally, Andrew finished right behind Kara in 2nd place at the Clash of Kings this year.

Kara says that her opinion on gamers in general is that they are a great group of people. She says they are usually very open and accepting, and that "while some people are dicks, most gamers are open to new things and new people. It's easier to accept someone who's gay or lesbian if you've been roleplaying a half-dragon orc or a half-elf bard." She loves going to conventions, and recently came off of a victory at CinciCon. She may be playing at a tournament at Nashcon, but otherwise says that those looking to challenge her in a game of Kings of War should come find her at GenCon and Origins!

It was a great interview, and Kara's closing words to everyone were "Come out and play! We need more people to join the game, to try it out; It's a good game. Come to conventions, kick my butt, I welcome it. I love playing against new people: That's how we all get better."

Thanks Kara!▪

Abyssal Dwarf Dragon Fire-team by "puggimer"

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